

MISS JEFFREYS AS THE BRAKIN

A FARCE COMEDY OF SIMPERING AND HYSTERICAL IDIOTCY.

"The Dear Unfair Sex" Turns an Actress's Charm to Lightness, Her Talent to Abomination—Topsy Scenes by George Giddens the Only Redemptive Feature.

That capable and charming actress, Miss Ella Jeffreys, fell a victim last night at the Liberty to a young playwright with an obnoxious sense of humor. The heroine of "The Dear Unfair Sex" is a young wife with a talent for hysterics and an enjoyment of the petty tyrannies they enable her to practice on her husband and her relatives. Added to this she has the folly of imagining that people are secretly in love with her when they only hold her in secret abomination. Of the farce comedy in which she is the central figure the first act exploits her pettiness and tyranny, the second act her preposterous folly and the third act her final subjugation as the result of this folly to her puppy dog husband, now at last become quasi Petruchio to an anemic Katherine.

There was a time when idiocy was regarded as a fruitful source of amusement. Pops records that the gallants and even the gentlemen of his time paid their shillings for the joy of laughing at the inmates of Bedlam. The Elizabethans poured shouts of delighted laughter by exhibiting on the stage the antics of madmen. Mediæval sculptors took a strange joy in portraying in cathedral carvings various forms of dementia so accurately studied and rendered that the eminent Charcot declared them as capable of scientific diagnosis as patients in the clinics of modern Paris.

But there is an example of this sort of thing which is relatively even more ancient—the English dramatists of the latter nineteenth century, who never tired of exploiting for the playing public of their time the milder forms of female paranoia—and it is these whom Mr. Ingels Allen has followed. The result is as painful a bit of theatrical antiquity as it has lately been our sorrow to witness.

In so far as the play keeps Miss Jeffreys constantly in the foreground and actively employed there it is an admirable stage vehicle but those who were responsible for its selection overlooked the circumstance that, to the modern sense, it unaccountably makes an able and charming actress hideous and repulsive. It is safe to say that Miss Jeffreys's powers have never been more strikingly evident than in the depths of her boredom. The zealous press agent has likened the piece to "The Taming of the Shrew." But even the crude Elizabethan play which Shakespeare did his best to reform does not brood in heavy and robust humors. This modern shrew begins in silliness and ends in sheer imbecility.

In technique, as well as in spirit, Mr. Ingels Allen is a young Oxonian. When he is an older man he will probably take as his models more recent playwrights. His "great" scene lugs in again a husband's chambers with the heroine concerned from her husband in the bedroom. The situation is managed with considerable skill—skill of the chop logic order of the school which made this piece a main stock in trade. But a dead line is carried to any live pup, and at its best this old scene roared briefly and ineffectively.

The one saving grace of the evening is a silly as in his cups, presented with not a little exaggeration by George Giddens. It is he who gives the one touch of vivacity to the scene, and in the young husband's befuddlement it is a capital lifeline and amusing denouement. While he was on the stage there was a good deal of real and hearty laughter, and in the young husband's served to emphasize the dry topped age and bald antiquity of the piece as a whole.

The cast was worthy of far better stuff. The husband, played by Mr. Ingels Allen, is the memorable Kleschna, made what could be made of the earlier scenes of imbecile abasement and when it came to the final scene, the husband displayed no little masculine firmness and power.

Gerald Lawrence, who has hitherto figured in romantic roles with Irving and Rachel Lee, slipped easily into drawing room manners as the young husband, and the heroine imagined in love with her and disclosed a handsome and attractive presence. Her standing was capital as an irascible old man and a young man of distinction to an unimportant juvenile part.

ANOTHER "KRUTZER SONATA."

Bertha Kallie gives a Dignified Performance in the Gordin Play.

Bertha Kallie opened her second season as an English speaking actress at the Lyric last night in Langdon Mitchell's version of "The Krutzer Sonata." A large audience gave her an enthusiastic welcome, and she was repeatedly applauded after the second and third acts.

Miss Kallie's first appearance since her lengthy engagement in "Monna Vanna" was also a triumph. Her performance in the role she played most successfully on the Lyric stage.

Langdon Mitchell's version of the play, as is now and incident got, differs but slightly from the version in which Bertha Kallie has already appeared. The sequence of several of the episodes has been altered, and the better, apparently. A distinct improvement was the toning down of some of the less important climaxes.

Miss Kallie's interpretation of the rôle of Miriam was distinguished by dignified intensity of emotion, and a fine sense of play, in which she kills *Gretchen* and her sister, was of tremendous dramatic appeal and brought forth rounds of applause.

Henry Kolker, who played the rôle of *Raphael Friedlander*, *Miriam's* father, Jacob Kallie contributed to the success of the play by his well liked character interpretation of the rôle of *Ephraim*, an old musician. The remainder of the cast was excellent and the mounting, under the direction of Harrison Grey Fiske, adequate in every particular.

POLICEMEN COME TO BLOWS.

One of Them Law His Club and Puts the Other Under Arrest.

Patrolmen Thomas T. Smythe of the Prospect Park station and Henry H. Otten of the Fifth Avenue station had a quarrel at Prospect Park West and Seventh street, Brooklyn, yesterday afternoon. Otten was on duty and Smythe was on his way to the park to report for duty. Pedestrians were surprised when they saw the two men in full uniform come to blows.

Smythe struck Otten several times in the face and then Otten retaliated by using his by his fellow officer. He placed Smythe under arrest on a charge of assault and took him to the Fourth Avenue station. Smythe was permitted to go on his own recognizance. Charges will be made against both by Deputy Police Commissioner O'Keefe.

Fitzgerald—Blake, Sept. 10.—A romantic couple, culminated here yesterday afternoon in the marriage of Miss Agnes Blake, daughter of Francis Blake of New York, Mass., inventor of the Blake Telephone, youngest son of Desmond Fitzgerald, a resident of Brooklyn. The wedding, which took place at the home of the bride, was a very quiet affair, both Mr. Blake and Mr. Fitzgerald were present for the last few weeks. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. L. A. Silvery, assisted by the Rev. L. A. Silvery, who presided over the ceremony.

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LIVE TOPICS ABOUT TOWN.

Every day at the visiting hour a large black dog appears at the entrance to Bellevue Hospital and taking a position just outside the gate eagerly scans the faces of those who pass in and out.

For nearly a month the dog has kept his vigil. Each day, however, he displays less animation. He used to dart about among the visitors, sniffing here and there; now he stands with drooping ears, in no attitude of expectancy.

Who owns the dog is not known. His master must have entered the hospital as a patient and has probably long since passed out at the "little gate."

"Every little while," said the busy girl, "somebody writes a pathetic letter to the newspapers asking why it is that women will persist in riding in the smoking seats in street cars. Those letters always hit me good and hard. I ride in the smokers' seats, and I have my reason for it. It may not be anybody else's reason, but it strikes me as being a good one. I ride there so I can smell the tobacco smoke. I was brought up in a family of men who smoked so much that the whole house smelled like a cigar factory. Since coming to New York City I have been my ill fortune to know only men who do not smoke. I sometimes get so homesick for the whiff of a cigar, no matter of what brand, that I think I'll die, so I avert that calamity I slide into the smokers' seats in the car."

"The shirt waist that buttons in the back has had many tales told of it," said a business man at luncheon, "but it's my opinion that I've corralled the prize story. I was taking a constitutional in Central Park the other day, when a young and pretty woman in one of those Swiss cheese waists and carrying a book in her hand came out of a bypath and crossed over to a seat. She passed me I could not avoid seeing that her waist was unbuttoned from neck to belt, and that the gaping space showed a smooth, fair surface. I'm a married man and I knew I could button that waist just right. She sat down and leaned back against the seat and jumped as if she were shot. I lifted my hat and started toward her, and she got up, turned as red as fire and looked helplessly around, and there, coming toward us, leisurely leading his horse, was a mounted policeman, and I'm blest if that girl didn't back up to him and let him button her waist while I had to walk by ignored. Say, anything in a uniform can catch a woman."

And the Union Has Put the Immigration Officials on Its Track.

The members of the Chorus Singers' Union of the Metropolitan Opera House, known as Local 41 of the Actors' National Protective Union, have been left out in the cold altogether by Director Conried, who is due here from Europe to-day, according to information received by the officers of the union yesterday. The officers of the union, since Mr. Conried went away to Europe, have kept in daily communication with the unions of chorus singers on the other side and reported yesterday that thirty German singers are coming on the North German Lloyd liner *Grosser Kurfürst*, which will arrive to-day from Bremen, and that thirty Italian singers will arrive on Thursday from Genoa.

The union will try to prevent the landing of the singers on the ground that their engagement is in violation of the contract labor law.

The contention of Mr. Conried will probably be that the singers are artists, and therefore their employment is not a breach of the law. G. E. Marchand, secretary of Local 41, said that he had received word of the coming of the singers, who are to arrive in a list of the names of the singers to the immigration department," he said, "stating the circumstances and asking Commissioner Murray to say whether or not they certainly detain them pending an investigation. The German Chorus Union in Mannheim, which has a membership of about 100, has already signed with the German theatres and that they will be expelled from the union and also barred from the German theatres, and further that their cases will be taken to the courts."

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